

THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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"I Remember Mama"

VIRGINIA McMANUS

Rhetoric 101, Theme 8

IT SEEMS THAT AT SOME TIME IN EVERY WRITER'S career he produces a character sketch of his mother. "I Remember Mama" is usually pretty stereotyped; "Mama" is capable and philosophical and kind. She works much harder than she should, and she makes the best cherry pies in the world. "Mama" is short on looks, but her work-roughened hands are nevertheless soothing, her tired eyes understanding, and her too-ample figure comforting. Her hair is grey from years of toil and worry. "Mama" handles the family, including Father, with a deft but iron hand, and does a good job of it. "Mama" never tires, never complains, never puts herself first. She is a rock of Gibraltar, and the core of family life.

Somehow this wonderful woman is tied up with memories of Christmas trees and homemade sugar cookies, first formal dresses and graduation frocks lovingly hand-stitched, hot chocolate on cold days and lemonade on hot days. Even if the rest of the family go their sinful ways she attends church, white-gloved and wearing an ancient hat bravely topped with a new feather. She is pictured in her kitchen, aproned and be-smudged with flour; she is lovingly fluting a pie, basting a turkey, or plucking old leaves off the window-boxed geranium. All this means "Mama" to the American reader; she is a tradition and a pattern. And each time I read a tribute of this sort, I cannot help but think of my own "Mama" who would even detest being called by such a title.

My mother never felt that she was "cut out" to be a parent; the old bugaboo of the proper mother with her wispy hair and ample front haunted her. She had no particular desire to become over-weight and carelessly groomed for the sake of a child. She liked babies, but she also liked kittens and puppies and piglets. So when I was born, she was hardly elated, for I lacked the appeal that the young of the animal kingdom have. I was red and bald and horrible, and the sight of Clapp's baby cereal made her ill. But she adapted herself to all this and in her own way she became a mother.

As I remember her from my earliest days, she was fragile and blonde and helpless. Her art work was excellent, and her housework was deplorable. Our maid stayed only because she liked the gay atmosphere that always surrounded my mother. The apartment was cluttered with stray animals that Mother picked up in the alleys and brought home to bathe and feed. She tossed her clothes in corners, draped the doorknobs, smothered the delicate, satin-covered French chairs. Her art set-up was smack in the middle of the living room; her fashion drawings were stacked on every surface. When we went for our daily airing in the park she would toss paints, brushes, charcoal and sketch pad and last of all me into the buggy so that she could paint the lagoon and the other

children. In her sentimental moods she sang me to sleep with "Moonlight and Roses" and "Together."

As I grew older, I never enjoyed going to school or playing outside half as much as simply staying at home. Mother lived in a world of color and beauty and art; we went to junk shops in the heart of the colored section in search of antiques; we went behind the scenes everywhere. She re-decorated our apartment and changed the furniture three times as frequently as she cleaned it. Each time before the painters would arrive to change the wallpaper, we would stand on chairs and cover the walls with murals and sketches and writing.

Nothing ever changed at home. There was security of a sort in our beautiful if untidy home; Mother lavished on me the love she had always had for stray animals, and was determined to give me a childhood to remember. She forgot many things that are considered essential in bringing up a child; Sunday school, stories with morals, training in thrift and neatness and prudence were among them. But she tried to help me to learn about the things I showed an interest in. Despite her delicate stomach, she ordered a chicken intact and dissected it because I had asked her what was inside one; together we pulled the radio and alarm clock apart to find where the noise came from. If she dominated my life, it was only because she was the most wonderful and colorful companion I could have hoped for, and she made most people seem insipid by comparison.

She never did become a proper "Mama." She never turned grey or wrinkled from her cares over her child. Motherhood never perplexed her that much; she loved her haphazard life and sharing it with her daughter was no trouble at all. Being an optimist, she never doubted that I would turn out well, and she never worried about me. To this day she does not feel that she has really been a proper "Mama" by the conventional standard, but since I have been away from home, I think we have both discovered how wonderful and how ideal our relationship actually was.

A Definition of Tolerance

MARILYN MORINE

Rhetoric 102, Theme 5

SINCE TOLERANCE IS AN ABSTRACT TERM, IT SEEMS almost indefinable. Semantics cannot classify it as a physical act, a state of mind, or a way of living. There are probably as many definitions for the word as there are people who use it. Most people would agree with the dictionary's definition of tolerance as "bearing with a person or putting up with views differing from one's own." This definition is cold and unfeeling, but perhaps very descriptive of the common man's conception of tolerance. To most people, tolerance means merely to "tolerate", and not, as it should, to learn to love as well.

Currently, "tolerance" is in vogue in America. That is, it is discussed by the women's groups and bandied about in the businessmen's conversation. Some people are proud of the fact that they are tolerant; others are just as proud that they are not. But by far the greatest majority are the indifferent ones who think they are tolerant because, having heard a lecture on the subject, they seldom condemn a particular race or religion in public. These are the people who make the fight against intolerance an uphill struggle, because they are certain that as long as they are not actually intolerant, they are on the right track and need not be moved to serious thought about the problem. They do not understand that true tolerance is based on love and not on indifference.

The roots of tolerance go deeper than the realm of conscious thinking; they lie at the depths of feeling rather than reasoning. Tolerance is more than a movement to allow Negroes to be served in white barber shops; it is more than allowing little Johnny to play with the neighbor's children whose parents came from Poland; it is more than remembering to serve fish on Friday if the guests are Catholic. These are outward signs which come from conscious thought. True tolerance is the unaffected feeling of brotherhood which comes from the heart, that does not question the fact that the man is more important than his customs and his way of life.

Someone has said that in understanding there is no need for forgiveness. The meaning of understanding, in this case, could also apply to tolerance, for understanding is the basis for love and love of fellow man is the basis for true tolerance. If we understand why a man believes as he does and if we really love him, not for what he does, but for what he is, then we are tolerant.

Literature and the Discovery of Values

GORDON FALES

Rhetoric 101, Final Theme

IT IS A GREAT FAULT OF HUMAN NATURE THAT SO FEW people understand how they should live, or what Law governs their lives, or even why they are alive. Most people live a day by day existence based upon earthly ambitions. This type of life, disregarding its sensualistic compensations, fairly drips boredom and unhappiness.

When a good novelist builds his characters around inherent traits or faults of man, such as those mentioned above, he can produce a piece of literature of real value. A novel of this type not only affords reading enjoyment, but also can be of a great help to its readers in solving the problems in their own lives.

Robert Penn Warren has written such a novel in *All the King's Men*. Jack Burden, the hero of the story, was a cowardly sort of man for many years. He did not want to grow up and assume the responsibilities and disappointments of life; he much preferred the warmth and comfort of an imaginary womb which he built around himself. However, through the rise and fall of Willie Stark and the course of events which Stark's career brought about, Jack Burden became a man. He came to realize his responsibility to his fellow men and even more important he came to understand and believe the scholarly attorney's statement that God's creation of the evil in the world was justified; that "the only way for God to create, truly create, man was to make him separate from God Himself, and to be separate from God is to be sinful. The creation of evil is therefore the index of God's glory and His power. That had to be so that the creation of good might be the index of man's glory and power." With these new realizations and beliefs instilled in his character, Jack was ready, as he himself put it, to face the "awful responsibility of Time."

I have said few people understand how they should live. Those that don't, such as Jack Burden, either die after a useless life or come to realize the truth as Jack did. However, there is a worse fate than never understanding. It is only barely within the scope of our imagination: the horrible existence of an intelligent man who has surveyed the facts of his existence and arrived at a morally confused sense of values and way of life.

Such a creature was Ivan Karamazov, as created by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Ivan was a desperately unhappy man. He was torn between love of man, faith in God, and purely Satanic characteristics in his nature. Ivan's intellect and complexity of mind drove him slowly to a mental derangement that bordered on insanity. He cursed his wonderful mind and fervently wished for stupidity, as we see when he complains to his brother Alyosha, "I would give all this super-stellar life, all the ranks and honors, simply to be transformed into a merchant's wife weighing eighteen stone [250 lbs.] and setting candles before the icons [altar]."

The life which Ivan believed in was a terrible thing. He reasoned that since such horrible things happened in this life of ours (the example he used was the torturing of little children) there could be no God, or He would have prevented such tragedies. And since there is no God, there is no virtue—virtue becomes useless. Without a God and without virtue all things become lawful. Murder, rape, pillage—all these things become lawful in Ivan's world. It is no wonder that a man tormented by such bitter and agonizing thoughts would be driven to insanity.

With Ivan's tortured mind for background, we can understand how he completely breaks down when he realizes that by instilling his philosophy in Smerdyakov, the bastard half-brother, he has incited the death of his father and caused his brother, Mitya, to be sentenced to Siberia for the murder.

However, it may be said, happily enough, that the novel gives the impression that Ivan will recover from his derangement. And I believe we can

assume that if he did recover, he would have found a real sense of values through his suffering, and would be able to face the responsibility of the world, just as Jack Burden did.

We who are young can benefit greatly from the lives of Ivan and Jack. We must all pray that we shall not remain lethargic, as did Jack Burden, and that we shall not succumb to the frustrations and doubts that attack us, as did Ivan Karamazov. Instead let us completely accept the advice of Alyosha when he said, "Ah, children, ah, dear friends, don't be afraid of life! How good life is when one does something good and just!" When we wholeheartedly believe these words we shall know that the Lord is with us and our true sense of values is complete.

Man's Love For His Country

ULDIS BLUKIS

Rhetoric 101, Theme 6

EVER SINCE MAN CEASED TO BE A NOMAD HE HAS LOVED one particular place more than any other—namely the place where his childhood was spent, his home, or in a broader sense his native country.

The love for "our country," the consequences of losing "our country," are part of the tragedy of the "Okies" in Steinbeck's novel *Grapes of Wrath*.

Although Steinbeck does not pose the question directly, he set me thinking about the causes behind this love for one's country. As a matter of fact we hear the answer quite often, but we fail to understand it because it is often hidden under a cover of high-sounding patriotic expressions.

There are two basic reasons why we love our country. First, man's spirit and soul is ninety-nine percent the product of circumstances and inheritance; second, any healthy and natural man holds at least a subconscious conviction that he is right, that his people, his country are the ones which are natural, more perfect than any other. Because of these two facts man feels best in the familiar places where he was raised. He likes and understands best the people who speak his language, who behave as he does.

The modern man feels less attached to his country because the modern world is becoming smaller and smaller, and the differences dividing it are becoming less significant. The same types of machines are used all around the globe now; modern cities are planned and built almost alike. Men restricted by the rigid rules of society are modeling their behavior after one pattern. Modern means of communication enable them to hear the same ideas, to see the same entertainment. In short, the circumstances modern men live in have become more alike than ever before in history; consequently men have become more alike. They feel more at home anywhere in the world where the modern ways of living are common.

In Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* we see a different kind of people. These are natural, simple people with strong emotions and convictions. They are bound tightly to the place of their childhood. However, each is an individual, each reacts differently when he loses his country.

There are those old people to whom the loss means death. Grampa and Granma are like trees torn out of their place of growth. They cannot be transplanted—they are too old. They wither and die. Muley is the same; he stays in his country at the expense of his dignity even though he knows it means death.

Then there is Pa, whose fighting spirit is lost together with his country. He does not really look forward any more. His soul remains with his country. He tries to exist from day to day; his ambition does not reach further.

Ma is a fighter. She dreads the strange, unfriendly country they are in. But she tries to put against it their "Okie" spirit—the part of their country they could take with them. She tries to preserve that spirit by preserving the family, which rapidly disintegrates as soon as its country is lost.

Least affected by the loss are the young people. Tom does not think about past or future; he tries to forget the home he has left and expects nothing from "the land of promise," because he feels it is better to live only for today. And the three youngest ones are not yet mature. They can still change. They can learn to love a new country.

Steinbeck expresses the idea best in the following passage from the novel. After the Joads have crossed the desert and see the beautiful gardens, fruit trees and houses in the green valley below, Ma is expressing her grief that Grampa and Granma cannot see this. Tom answers:

"They wouldn't of saw nothin' that's here. Grampa would a been a-seein' the Injuns an' the prairie country where he was a young fella. And Granma would a remembered an' seen the first home she lived in. They was too ol'. Who's really seein' it is Ruthie an' Winfiel'."

* * * *

The big white house sits well back from the highway; from the road you see only a colonial country home—a flash of red shutters and ivory blinds—set in a background of rich tapestry green. Lilac bushes stand on either side of the white picket gate like chunky matrons, their heads inclined toward each other in a social, confidential way. The picket fence is scarcely discernible: rose and razzberry bushes have choked it into a green hedge. Patriarchal northern pines cut the lawn into small, useless, green patches, so whimsical was the plan of the planter. More green—piney shrubs and bushes—hugs the house like a hot and heavy fur collar. Each spring finds this heavy foliage sneaking a little higher up the walls; and, not so timidly, sprawling lazily out into the grass. Morning-glories climb the chimney to feel the eastern sun; early morning travelers see a great patch of clear blue and smokey pink blossoms against the white and green background as they pass. This place, then, almost oppressive in its perennial greenness, was to the casual observer the general setting of what was my happiest home.

MARY F. SHIVE, 101.

Shakespeare in High School

GLORYA MAY

Rhetoric 101, Theme 6

WHY SHOULD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BE FORCED TO study Shakespeare? It seems a shame that they should have to spend valuable time studying literature that is not suited to their age group, their tastes, or their needs. Of course, there is much to be said in favor of the study of Shakespeare's works, but this study should be left for the colleges and not taught in high school.

In the first place, high school students want concrete facts. They are, for the most part, incapable of comprehending the abstract implications of Shakespeare. The tragedies *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* usually impress the high school students as being purely imaginative nonsense. Since to the majority the visions of the dagger and dreams of foreboding described are merely the fanciful products of a poet's mind, the moral value and the true meaning of the passages do not sink in.

Then, too, the time students have to spend memorizing lines and passages is almost a complete waste. It would be far better if more emphasis was placed upon grammar and composition, which are necessary in every phase of life. After all, the student who goes on to a job right after high school has no more time to learn to express himself, and certainly the ability to quote a few words of Shakespeare will be of no help in writing a business letter or making out a report. As for the college student, the lack of enough grammar and composition work in high school is often the primary reason he has so much trouble with rhetoric placement tests.

Even from the cultural standpoint there is little to be said for the study of Shakespeare in high school. Few people go around quoting Shakespeare, and any possible cultural benefit must come from complete understanding of the plot and theme of the work. Very few teen-agers have either the ability or the disposition to discern the meaning behind the rhyme scheme. Even the points learned about Shakespeare's method of plot development and versification do not remain with the student long enough to become a topic of conversation or an incentive for further reading.

The saddest but most important argument against the study of Shakespeare in high school is the fact that the student actually learns to hate anything Shakespearean. Since he doesn't understand Shakespeare, he naturally dislikes the plays violently. This dislike often lasts a lifetime, and it is really too bad, for the college student would get much more value out of his literature courses, and the non-college person would enjoy reading good literature far more if he had not had an unfortunate exposure to Shakespeare at too early a period in his education.

So the study of Shakespeare in high school leaves the student with no noticeable advantages. The lines memorized are soon forgotten, but the habits of reading for words rather than for understanding and the dislike for Shakespearean works remain for a long time. There is really no point in loading the high school student with a study he cannot appreciate. It would be far better to leave the teaching of Shakespeare to the colleges where the students are old enough and interested enough to derive some good from it.

Number Three

JOAN MARTIN

Rhetoric 102, Theme 5

HE STARED DEEPLY INTO MY EYES AND I HAD THE uncomfortable feeling that he could see straight through to the back of my head. He spoke now in a soft, reassuring, monotone. "I am going to tell you a number and I want you to tell me what it reminds you of. Tell me the first thing that comes into your mind. Number three!"

It didn't seem to me to be a very special number, but I decided to do my best with it. "Three blind mice," I said with confidence.

From the sudden glint in his eye I could tell that he was saying to himself, "Aha, here is a person who is disappointed by life and wants to revert back to childhood." He said aloud, "Try again."

I decided to play along with him and answered quickly "Three little kittens; three bears."

"That's fine," he said smugly. "Now could you think of something still referring to the same number but of a little more serious nature?"

This request called for some deep thought, and after a moment something ran through my mind. "It reminds me of the three triangular shaped rubies on the crown of King Abashaba, who ruled in Egypt during the year 3333 B.C. during the time of the Third Blue Dynasty and his rule was marred by three wars whose names and dates are— — — — —."

I paused for breath. I could tell he was shaken. Perhaps he was saying to himself, "Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe this person is a serious student who has forced her mind too much."

He made one last attempt, still using the old number three. It was late, so I tried to think of something that would end our conversation. I blurted out, "Three Feathers!"

I was almost sorry after I said it, because he looked so shocked and confused. My plan had worked, however. He said, "That will be all for today."

I couldn't help wondering as I started to leave the psychologist's office which of us was more bewildered. His office girl, however, had complete presence of mind under my glassy-eyed stare as she said, "Three dollars, please!"

Environment and Morals

SHIRLEY McVICAR

Rhetoric 102, Theme 3

MORALS ARE THE STANDARDS OF RIGHT AND WRONG which guide the actions of every society, but it is the environment in which each society exists that determines what these standards are to be. What is considered proper behavior in one community may be taboo in another. Therefore, it is wise to investigate the mores and surroundings of an individual society before condemning its ethical pattern.

The manner in which young lovers court demonstrates clearly the psychological influence which tradition exercises over behavior. In the hills of Virginia, the courtship is transacted as the two sweethearts walk home from church. To the inhabitants of Chicago's Southside, where street corner pick-ups are not uncommon, such a mode of love-making might seem insipid. Moreover, the Virginians would wonder at, and undoubtedly be shocked by, the seemingly lewd technique of the Chicagoans.

Propriety of dress is another point of difference. In this matter, however, tradition teams up with climate to establish what each society considers an appropriate manner of attire. Again the South merits reference, for here, during the summer months, shoes are an unnecessary and unused accessory to many of the hill people. Though such an omission would be an unpardonable laxity in Boston, it must be remembered that Bostonian customs are formal and Bostonian weather is cool. Much farther south, in South Africa, dress is reduced to a mere fragment of cloth. Although the natives accept this type of costume as suitable, a citizen of the United States would be arrested for indecent exposure if found in such vesture.

Christianity and the absence of Christianity have exerted much moral force in the establishment of dietary laws. In a society of Christian people, the consuming of fellow men would be unspeakable; but in a community of heathens, cannibalism may be prevalent. The Hindus uphold the sacredness of the cow and are appalled at the cold manner in which other societies slaughter and devour that animal. Likewise members of the Jewish religion eat only that food which is sanctioned as ritually clean.

The moral code of one society cannot, then, be expanded to direct the actions of every other society. Such factors as tradition, climate, and religion, must be considered before a standard of behavior can be established. And these factors must be considered again before judgment is passed on any existing code of ethics.

His Brother's Keeper

S. C. EASTWOOD

Rhetoric 102, Theme 11

AS THE TWILIGHT DEEPENED, LIGHTS FLICKERED ON IN the long rows of grey buildings. Somewhere in the distant hospital area a group of men were singing. The melody was familiar but the words were strange and alien. Two men, standing ankle deep in snow, faced each other across the wind-swept compound. One stood erect, his back to the wind. His boots were polished to that peculiar state of perfection which immediately identifies the wearer as a member of the General Staff. Despite the bitter cold, he wore no overcoat. His tight fitting tunic, of the washed-out khaki color that blended so perfectly with the desert sand, was without decoration save for the red and black ribbon of the Iron Cross, first class. His face was the distinctive shade of white characteristic of those who habitually avoid the sun or are convalescing from a long and serious illness. It was without blemish save for the right cheek, which was an angry mass of red scar tissue.

The man facing the wind was of approximately the same height and general proportions, but he slouched in such a manner as to appear almost a head shorter. His boots were issue, undyed, and covered with fresh mud. His huge field coat was as shapeless as a piece of new canvas. Every item of clothing upon his person appeared to have been just taken from the quartermaster's shelves. Only his pistol holster was old. Long exposure to the action of tropical fungus had turned it a permanent dirty-green. His face was the deep, unnatural yellow known as "atabrine-tan." In spite of the dissimilarity in dress, his features bore a striking resemblance to those of the other man.

His eyes wandered from the man in the beautiful boots to the ranks of silent men behind him. Ten thousand men stood as straight and still as if they were literally frozen. This mass of blue and khaki-clad humanity extended almost to the double wall of barbed wire marking the perimeter of the compound. The wire stretched in a straight line, a quarter of a mile in each direction. At regular intervals the monotony of the wire was broken by thirty foot guard towers.

On the catwalk of each tower a lone sentry stood by the black, ugly snout of a machine gun. Silhouetted as the sentries were against the setting sun, one appeared as lifeless as the other. Each was an efficient but wholly impersonal part of the environment.

A wooden rail of rough lumber stretched in an unbroken line six feet inside the wire. It was the death rail. To cross the rail was to invite a hail of bullets from the nearest tower. This too was a part of the system, completely impersonal. The rail was a dirty white color, save for a four foot strip which was raw and splintered.

Beyond the wire, a hungry rabbit, lured from his hiding place by the lengthening shadows, leisurely inspected the long dead flowers still neatly arranged in front of a single wooden cross. Finding nothing to his liking, he hopped out of sight behind the neat white picket fence.

As the last red arc of the sun slipped behind the cottonwoods lining the distant river bank, the man in the shapeless coat pulled himself erect. It was a jerky, abrupt movement, as if he were forcing himself to perform some particularly unpleasant duty.

"Re-PORT!" The single word of command cut the cold air like the dry crack of a rifle shot. The German raised his arm in salute. It was the honored and respected salute of the Wehrmacht, not the silly gesture of the Nazi party. "Officers' compound, all present or accounted for, Sir." And then, in a voice so low the men behind him could not hear, he added, "A Merry Christmas, Martin."

Portrait of an Introvert

MARILYN GILLISON

Rhetoric 101, Theme 2

REVOLVING IN AN ORBIT OF HIS OWN MAKING WITHOUT ever wanting to deviate from the course he has chosen is the introvert, a human being lost in the fascinating domain of himself. Like a planet in a lonely solar system of its own, he drifts slowly, deliberately, in an isolated path around his soul.

The well-meaning, but unwanted people who try to befriend him are like foreign planets who would undoubtedly upset the timing and precision of a planet's fixed revolution if they were allowed to penetrate its orbit.

Annoying, too, are the little asteroids who constantly intrude upon the precious solitude of the planet's lonely track. There seems to be no way of preventing their careless wanderings in and out of its isolated realm. These asteroids are like the people the introvert is forced to contact in the daily process of living.

Once in a great while, a bright, forceful comet will pierce the outer boundaries of the planet's celestial home, leaving a gaping hole behind it. No longer does the planet remain in a fixed cycle, but finds itself free to move into a great network of orbits. The old tiresome journey is quickly abandoned in the excitement of becoming a part of something greater and better.

The comet may be in the form of a person, a sudden interest in a new job, or even a problem that must be overcome. No matter what it is, if it can divert the introvert's attention from himself, his life will be made more complete. Unfortunately, too many people who have become lost within themselves are

never jolted into facing reality. The pathways in the outer world can lead too easily to sorrow, disaster, or ruin. It seems better to remain in the old orbit where nothing new must be encountered, and where security can be expected. And the rest of the world soon learns to shun the introvert; his path is side-stepped and he is soon left far behind.

The orbit of this lonely planet can be traced as a perfect circle with a circumference so flawless that almost nothing can penetrate it. Thus, the introvert, in the same way, misses the richness and fullness that could have been brought to his life by experiences with the others. He believes his single orbit is complete within itself; after all, what path could be easier to follow than a perfect circle?

The circle may be perfect, but all that can be seen of it is the excellence of its outer rim. There is nothing on the inside; it is an empty thing which is merely the absence of love, sorrow, ambition, and all those things that make a life worth living.

* * * *

"EUCLID ALONE HAS LOOKED ON BEAUTY BARE"

The words of Edna St. Vincent Millay, "Euclid alone has looked on beauty bare," may seem to many people naive, or even meaningless. Perhaps it is, for it obviously implies that true beauty exists only in geometry. But after all, what is most beauty besides a combination of curves and planes? To me, beauty is something approaching perfection, and geometry *is* perfection.

Consider the lowly circle. It is nothing more than a curved line always equidistant from its center point—simplicity at its uttermost, yet what else dares to rival a circle in its perfection? Once a circle is drawn, the point of beginning and point of ending are lost, and a continuous line is left—unending, unfading beauty.

If I rotate this circle on a diameter, I generate a sphere, the prime geometric figure of the entire universe, for all the heavenly bodies are imperfect spheres. The Almighty Father must have admired the sphere immeasurably, for he molded an infinite number of them and set them spinning in that vast vacuum known to us as the universe, for all mankind to admire.

I see beauty even in the straight line. A straight line has no boundaries; it stretches from infinity to infinity. I see the beauty of freedom in the straight line, and the beauty of the inexplicable.

I do not maintain that true beauty lies in geometry alone. One can find beauty in nearly everything if he only has the patience to look. Trees, flowers, buildings, paintings, the human body,—all are beautiful, but all consist of various combinations of geometric figures. Indeed, if broken down into their separate components, most things of beauty would be only colored illustrations in a geometry book.

JOHN T. HENRY, 101.

Miss Rampert's Thread

MARY CAROL WAXLER

Rhetoric 101, Theme 1

MISS RAMPERT MARCHED INTO THE DIME STORE WITH purpose shining on her thin, bespectacled face. She had come to town for only one reason: to purchase a spool of number seventy thread to finish the quilting on her new Wedding-Ring quilt. She had to buy the thread and hurry home in order to finish the quilt for her niece Maria's wedding. After letting the door swing back into the face of the next shopper, Miss Rampert headed for the thread counter.

She had just passed the doughnut machine when she spied the fortune-telling scales on the far aisle.

"No," she muttered to herself, "I mustn't do it."

But her feet, obeying her mind, walked right over to the scales and stepped up. Snapping open her new, black patent-leather purse, she took out a penny and stuck it in the slot. A whirring noise, two or three clicks, and out came a small card into her waiting hand.

"Keep close to home or disaster may strike—108 lbs." said the card. Miss Rampert tucked it carefully in her purse to show her neighbor, Bessie Lambkin, when she got home.

Again on her way to the thread, she paused for a minute to watch a four-year old hero wearing cow-boy boots as he rode the mechanical bucking bronco in the front of the store. A stern look on his face proved that he was the Gene Autry of his day chasing thirty or forty badmen all at once. Miss Rampert, nodding with a smile to his mother, moved toward her destination.

Conversation on her right caught her attention as she passed the cosmetic counter. A heavily made-up woman with bleached hair was doing all the talking.

"Now, madam, all ya hafta do is to put this here curler on the heat for a minute or two. Hold it up to yer eyes, and presto, ya've got curly eyelashes just like the movie stars. . . . Would ya like one, Madam? They's only a dollar each."

Miss Rampert sniffed coldly as she turned away, and mumbled to the lady next to her that she wouldn't curl her eyelashes for any man. Anyway, the result might make her look like the painted lady selling the gadgets.

She moved to the stairs to the balcony and climbed them slowly as she watched the women below her gathering around several racks of dresses marked "Excellent Cotton Dresses—\$1.98—Special Today Only." Miss Rampert decided not to hunt for house dresses today, for she had bought two last week from the same rack.

At the first table at the head of the stairs she searched through a jumble of yard goods remnants to find pieces suitable for her next quilt. One which she decided would do if she made an Around-the-World quilt was marked ten cents. After trying to convince the salesgirl that two cents tax was not charged on a dime sale, she paid the twelve cents and took her package.

"No," she thought proudly, "I'm not one to haggle over pennies."

Deciding that she might as well eat her lunch in the dime store, Miss Rampert moved on to the lunch counter, where she ordered a frosty malt—chocolate—and a hot dog with ketchup and pickle relish.

"That hot dog was good, but," she reflected as she drained the last drop of her malt, "I've had better drinks than this girl makes. Next time I'll get the blonde waitress to serve me."

Now she decided to purchase her one spool of thread and go home. Although the store didn't have the kind of thread she ordinarily used on her nicest quilts, she found some that would do this time. On her way from the thread counter, she purchased a quarter's worth of salted peanuts to eat on her bus ride home.

"Really," she thought as she went out the door, "I haven't wasted much time. I bought my thread, and, my . . . I wonder what kind of a disaster to expect."

With that startling thought in mind, Miss Rampert, with her thread and sack of peanuts, trudged across the street to wait for her bus.

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* * *

LAKE FRONT VIEW

You are in Chicago on the South Side shore of Lake Michigan. It is a hot summer day and the friendly blue water invites you to join the late afternoon swimmers. The waves, sparkling in sunlight, lazily slap against rocks splotted with the prints of wet bare feet. The deep green firs contrast with the pale green of the grass around the rocks. A few gulls scream in the cloudless sky above. The shore to your left curves sharply so that you can see the heavy traffic speeding along the outer drive that follows the shoreline all the way downtown. Far to the north the skyscrapers, narrow and grey, blend with the light haze that shrouds them.

The sun, moving westward behind you, leaves a pinkish cast in the sky over the lake. It is cooler, and the people on the beach around the shore to your right are leaving. The water, restless now, is discouraging the swimmers on the rock levels below you and they leave too.

As it grows later, the trees become feathery silhouettes. Look how the water, so welcoming a while ago, now seems aloof, yellow-green, choppy. Look above you now; the sky and stars are a splash of rhinestones against blue-black velvet. The unbroken string of streetlights along the outer drive brilliantly outlines the shore. The haze is gone now and the buildings of the skyline stand out like a hundred miniature dominoes. Every few seconds, a search light beam flashes out and sweeps the sky. A heavy blanket of silence has fallen, muting the sounds of city and traffic. It gives you a strange feeling, doesn't it? You can see the hodge—podge of light, color, and motion, but all you can hear is a wave splashing, a cricket chirping, and perhaps a whisper from the wind.

LISA GALAM, 101.

Caesar or Calculus?

H. F. CROMBIE

Rhetoric 102 Proficiency Examination

BEFORE ULTIMATELY DECIDING BETWEEN A FUNDAMENTALLY liberal and a fundamentally technical education, one should first carefully define then critically compare these two great bed-rocks of human knowledge.

The etymology of the two words provides a revealing clue to their definitions. The adjective "liberal" is derived from the Latin word *liber*, meaning *free*. That is just what liberal arts ultimately concerns itself with, the free and untrammelled analysis of the world's great thoughts by the world's great minds. The word "technical," on the other hand, is given to us by the Greeks from their word *techné*, meaning *art*, in its present application, the useful arts. This activity of course is what all technicians are practicing in one form or another.

Let us look at the great common domain of these two realms before setting out to point our contrasts. This shared treasure is *mathematics*; but while the subject matter is the same, the approach and ultimate aims are different. The technical student's task is to put calculus to work for him so that he may use it to construct an auditorium or design a better vegetable can. The liberal arts scholar is interested in mathematics more for its own sake. Here we discover a fundamental difference between their whole respective philosophies. The liberal scholar is interested in all knowledge for its own sake, while the technical man surveys things with a practical eye, concerning himself with immediate material benefits for himself, his employer or mankind. It is natural for such a man to look with jaundiced eye on the esoteric pursuits of the medieval French literature scholar, just as, reciprocally, the latter will never understand what makes a man devote a lifetime to a study of the stresses and strains in boiler plates at high temperature.

How are we to reconcile these two great parallel rivers of human achievement? After all they, like the seven and twenty jarring sects, are pursuing the same ultimate ideal, knowledge. I believe in a liberal (in its broader sense) sampling of each in any curriculum of study. If good engineers and poets are born and not made, they will become engineers and poets anyway. But if they are not (and this is somewhat more credible) let the twig be subject to a fair distribution of pedagogical forces.

Two on the Isle

ROGER DEAKINS

Rhetoric 101, Theme 11

HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW IT CAME TO BE THAT HE HAD been left on the island, nor did he care. Since he had given up his old way of life, the motivations of his fellowmen had become a mystery to him. He was aware that he had not washed nor shaved for over a month, but as to whether there were deeper reasons, he was indifferent. He could adapt himself to almost any place. And one place was like any other. What did bother him was why the girl had followed him. But then he decided to accept that too.

The ship had pulled alongside the dock only long enough to leave the two expatriates and then it disappeared again into the world-haze. The two figures stood alone and erect on the dock watching the ship until it was gone. Then they turned and walked with rapid steps toward the native settlement.

They walked in silence for a half-mile and then the girl turned to her companion.

"Where are we going?" she asked softly.

"Here. Of course. Where else in the world have you ever been? Where else is there to go?"

He was beginning to form a concrete resentment of her presence, but still she persisted. It was apparent that she was not interested in his answers to her questions, except as justification for her own abnormal behavior.

"Why did you leave your wife?"

A frown crossed his face and his answer was choked and angry. Doubtful yet of his own actions, he was on the defensive.

"Why shouldn't I? I did my duty to the Race." The frown passed and he turned forward again, smiling slightly. "I left her with child."

And so they came to the settlement, and he decided to secure horses and supplies and to make the longer journey to the northern tip of the island.

Their silence had been broken; the rest of the journey he spent in trying to restore the pieces.

"Why have you followed me?" he finally inquired.

"I am looking for a friend."

"I doubt if you will find him here."

It was to no avail. She wouldn't keep quiet.

"I am looking for a friend of the soul. It matters not that you are a man, for the soul is asexual."

He looked at her sharply, as if aware of her presence for the first time. Indeed he now saw her as more than the mere condition of things; she was another being. He took a deep breath.

"Once I knew a little boy who was different. And his peculiarity was this: he looked like what he wasn't. Everyone liked him because they thought that he was one of them. They liked him until he opened his mouth; then he gave himself away. For he had not learned the prime law of living in society: that society asks certain questions of all young men, and it demands the same answers from each. There is no margin for disobedience. Even after he learned this, he could not comprehend it.

"He was unchangeable; society was unchangeable. And so he made an inevitable discovery. He told a little lie. And the surprise was: he fooled everyone and therefore they continued to love him. So he embroidered the little lie until it became the big lie, and as with most big things, it was appalling. But he learned to accept it and it became his shield against the world. Only he had to take it off at night when he went to bed, and then he had to live with the truth and sometimes when he got up in the morning his pillow was wet. But only when he was little, of course. As he grew up, he wore his albatross willingly, until the day he made another great discovery: there was someone more important than society.

"He was becoming aware of the most important person in the world: himself. Well, that is why I am here."

They reached the furthestmost part of the island; camp was set up easily and quickly. The sun dropped below the horizon and with it went all the energy of the physical world. Thus is the night the time when all truth is uncovered, for in the darkness all things of the body, which is non-truth, will perish.

The two lay on either side of the little campfire, not seeing each other, aware only of the purity of the fire between them.

"Consider this": he was saying, "that were it possible to take a man, and to strip away his flesh, to separate his mind from his body; and then from his mind to drive out all fears and hopes and desire, which are, after all, but conditions of the physical world; and to cast out morals and inhibitions which have likewise been inflicted upon him by his environment; then would there be anything left?

"If you answer no, then what hope is there for the individual?

"I think that there would be something; and in that Something which knows the meaning of true freedom, I will find the reason for being.

"I know that the answer lies within myself, for surely the mind which is capable of framing the question is also capable of answering it, if only it be willing to accept the truth."

"But," she answered, "have you not yourself removed all hope for the individual? For you have removed all identification, and without Identity, there can be no Individuals. Are you not, rather, conceiving Man as but a common will, of which each of us carries around a chunk for a few years in an identifiable cell of flesh, and therefore foolishly pride ourselves on being individuals?"

"Exactly," he replied, "And so there is the reason for my being: that I might propagate this will to the next generation. And so life has direction, but where does that direction lead? Of this I cannot, nay I need not know. And yet I wonder."

Understand, the sun had risen and set many times while these things were said, for nothing is discovered all at once, but is there all the time, and is only revealed by degrees.

And so this is the story of a man who held the fruit of reason in his hand, and by using that reason, he closed his hand and crushed the fruit until it was nothing except the incompressible pulp of Wonder, which he kept with him always.

The Electroencephalograph

LAURA RUST

Rhetoric 101, Theme 8

AS A RESULT OF THE STUDIES AND INVESTIGATIONS OF physiologists and neurologists during the past few years, many new and important instruments to aid science and medicine have been developed. One of the most recent and useful discoveries in the field of electrophysiology is the electroencephalograph. This instrument, which is capable of making a record of brain waves, was first put into operation following the discovery by H. Berger in 1929 that characteristic action currents of brain activity can be registered. Since its perfection, the instrument has proved to be of much value in the diagnosis of a number of abnormal brain conditions.

The electroencephalograph is of special interest to two sets of workers: physiologists, who study the behavior and characteristics of the brain wave rhythms, and clinical neurologists and psychiatrists, who use the brain wave rhythms in the diagnosis of abnormal conditions of the brain.

Through the work of the latter group, the electroencephalograph has been developed to such a degree that it is now possible to use it as a method of localizing damaged or diseased areas of the brain. The instrument has proved of great value in the discovery and determination of different kinds of epilepsy, in the discovery of brain tumors, and even in the discovery of some forms of mental disease.

It is possible to detect these various brain disorders by comparing brain wave rhythms of abnormal persons with the wave rhythms of a normal brain. For example, different kinds of epileptic attacks are associated with specific

patterns and rhythms. These attacks produce conditions which interfere with normal brain activity and cause uneven brain wave rhythms to show up in the test. In testing the brain waves of a normal person, a rather even, though jagged, pattern is found. Tests on abnormal persons show definite, uneven patterns. Thus by comparing abnormal to the normal in a fine, complicated reading, it is possible to determine almost certainly from what type of abnormality a patient is suffering.

The instrument itself is simply an electronic amplifier of great power which records brain wave rhythms upon photographic paper. Reading the results of the tests requires considerable training and skill, and as yet few persons in this country are sufficiently trained to make such a reading. The actual process, however, of running the test is fairly simple once the technique is developed, and is entirely painless to the patient.

If the patient is an adult or a cooperative child, he sits on a bed while the apparatus is being assembled and placed in position. Since it is necessary for the patient to remain quiet, however, a less cooperative one is given a sedative at the very beginning of the test. Contact with the brain waves is made through a series of six or eight units, reading simultaneously, so that the activity of several areas of the brain can be studied at the same time. These units are encased in a large machine. From each unit runs a wire, very fine and several feet in length, and on the end of each wire is a small, metal disc, called an electrode. Placing the electrodes on the head of the patient requires from fifteen to twenty minutes. The hair is parted (for the scalp positions) and a small amount of paste-like substance is put on the exposed area; the electrode, which has been dipped into a solution of collodion, is placed over this area, and air is blown through a small hose onto the collodion. In this manner the acetone in the solution is dried quickly and a film is formed which holds the electrode securely to the head. Each electrode has its place: one on each ear, one directly above each eye, two on top of the head, two at the back of the head, and one on each temple. (Sometimes fewer positions are used.) The electrodes are so placed to receive the sensations of the various lobes of the brain (occipital, temporal and frontal).

After the electrodes are in place, the patient must recline and relax, and, preferably, sleep, since the brain wave recordings show best results when the patient is completely passive. Naturally this procedure often requires the use of a sedative. While the patient sleeps, the actual test and recording is made. Each electrode, except the two attached to the ears, has a separate electromagnetic needle attachment which records the brain waves on a white paper—or scroll—which keeps turning continuously during the test. In this way the entire brain wave activity is recorded in a few minutes time. The voltage of the waves is minute, but the amplification used is sufficient to allow accurate recording through the scalp. After about ten minutes of these recordings, the patient is awakened, the electrodes removed, and the test is complete.

Although the electroencephalographic testing machine has been perfected to the degree that it is capable of making tests as delicate as those just described, there is still much about such brain wave testing that is completely baffling. Much study is still being devoted to the instrument and its uses, and new electrical methods of analyzing the complicated records are being devised.

Rhet as Writ

With the way taxes are today it would take a person a lifetime to collect a million dollars, and if and when this is done, a person is too old to enjoy it because how much traveling can a person do in a rocking chair except to a doctor's office once a week to make sure he will live to pay him some more money.

* * *

It is not a magazine for just men or women, but it is for boys, girls, men, women, and for anybody else who reads and doesn't come in this class.

* * *

War is a deadly thing. It destroys many lives and much propriety.

* * *

Look carefully before you shoot for innocent bystanders near your target.

* * *

In her blue uniform and black bag, the public-health nurse is an educator, advisor, and a fiend to the community.

* * *

Mickey Spillane's novels are a little out of the extraordinary.